

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 00410 050633Z

12

ACTION EA-10

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FM AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 197

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

UNCLAS PORT MORESBY 0410

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINS PP

SUBJECT: PETITION FOR INDEPENDENT PAPUA

REF: PORT MORESBY 261

1. DECEMBER 5 LOCAL PRESS REPORTS THAT 12 DELEGATES REPRESENTING BOTH PAPUA BESENA AND THE PAPUA (MOVEMENT) GROUP PRESENTED A PETITION ON DECEMBER 4 TO AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TOM CRITCHLEY CALLING ON AUSTRALIA TO:

(A) NOT PERMIT THE FORCED UNITY OF PAPUA WITH NEW GUINEA WHEN INDEPENDENCE IS GRANTED

(B) PAY FOR A PAPUA-WIDE TOUR BY THE SEPARATISTS TO CONSOLIDATE OPINION

(C) FINANCE A VISIT TO CANBERRA BY 20 SEPARATIST PAPUANS TO PUT THEIR CASE TO THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

(D) ALLOW PAPUANS TO MAKE A CHOICE ON THEIR FUTURE FREE FROM NEW GUINEA AND AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL INFLUENCE.

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PAGE 02 PORT M 00410 050633Z

2. DELEGATES WERE LED BY PAPUA BESENA LEADER AND

MEMBER HOUSE ASSEMBLY JOSEPHINE ABAIJAH.

3. HIGH COMMISSIONER REPORTEDLY TOLD DELEGATION ITS PROPOSALS WERE CONTRARY TO AUSTRALIAN POLICY, AND THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT AUSTRALIA WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC TO PROPOSALS CONFLICTING WITH PNG GOVERNMENT POLICIES. STATED AUSTRALIAN AID WAS DIRECTED TO THE RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT OF PNG, AND THAT UN, PNG, AND AUSTRALIA WERE COMMITTED TO A UNITED PAPUA NEW GUINEA.

4. PRESS NOTES THAT PAPUA GROUP, WHICH UNTIL RECENTLY HAD CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT PAPUAN STATE WITHIN PNG FEDERATION, HAD NOW JOINED FORCES WITH PAPUA BESENA IN CALLING FOR SEPARATE PAPUAN NATIONHOOD FOLLOWING QUOTE A MOST UNSATISFACTORY CONFERENCE UNQUOTE RECENTLY HELD WITH THE CHIEF MINISTER.

5. COMMENT: THE PAPUA GROUP WAS FORMALLY ESTABLISHED FOLLOWING OCTOBER 2 DEMONSTRATION CALLING FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF A PAPUA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD EMBRACE ALL SIX PAPUAN DISTRICTS. AT TIME GOVERNMENT INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO QUOTE STUDY UNQUOTE PROPOSAL. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE ISSUED IN NOVEMBER 22ND NEWS RELEASE STATED THAT FOUR PAPUAN DISTRICTS HAD REQUESTED THAT PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS BE ESTABLISHED IN EACH, AND THAT THEY HAD REJECTED THE CALL FOR A PAPUA-WIDE STATE. GOVERNMENT DECLARED THAT WHILE THIS CONSTITUTED A MAJORITY VIEW IT WAS WILLING TO HEAR THE MINORITY SIDE WHICH FAVORED THE GRANTING OF A SINGLE STATE GOVERNMENT FOR THE ENTIRE PAPUAN REGION. DISCUSSIONS WERE SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 26-27.

6. IN A NEWS RELEASE ON NOVEMBER 26 JOSEPHINE ABAIJAH OF PAPUA BESENA CHARACTERIZED THE PAPUA GROUP AS A QUOTE PHONY SPLINTER GROUP THAT HAS NO FOLLOWING UNQUOTE AND STATED THE GOVERNMENT WAS WASTING ITS TIME QUOTE CARRYING ON THE FARCE UNQUOTE OF DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PAPUA GROUP.

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PAGE 03 PORT M 00410 050633Z

7. BY NOVEMBER 29, FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CHIEF MINISTER, WHERE PRESUMABLY THE CONCEPT OF ESTABLISHING A SINGLE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT FOR ALL OF PAPUA HAD BEEN REJECTED, THE PAPUA GROUP, ACCORDING TO PRESS, HARDENED ITS POSITION, MOVED ONTO A COURSE PARALLEL TO THAT OF PAPUA BESENA, AND DEMANDED A SEPARATE STATE, NOT SIMPLY AN ALL-PAPUAN PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT WITHIN A UNITED PNG.

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